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Part of an international series of amply illustrated, colorful, small size books for children ages 5 to 10, this volume describes various aspects of life in India. Customs, religions, languages, housing, work, food, clothing and festivals of the people of India are presented. A discussion of the 15 main languages in India and the Indian love of motion pictures concludes the book. (NL)

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Living in India

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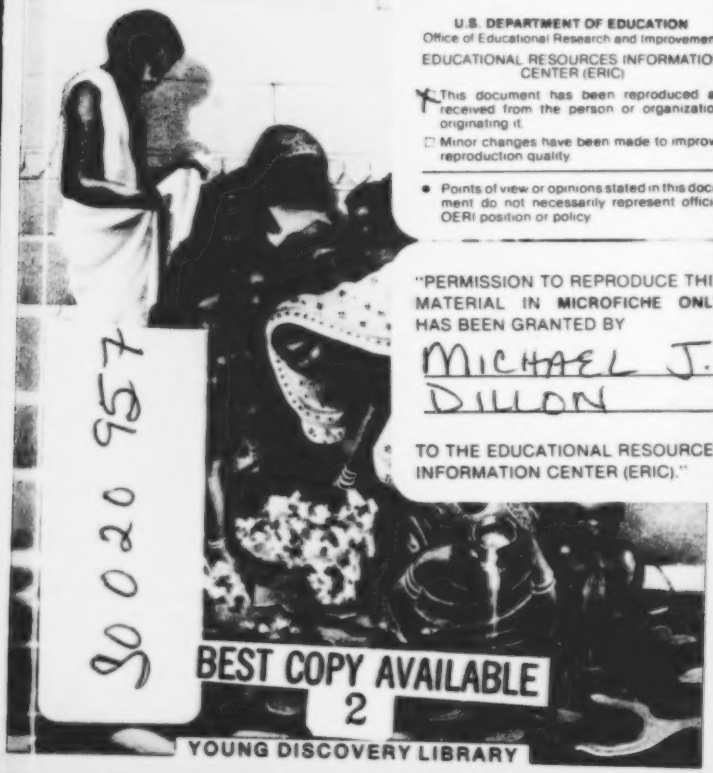

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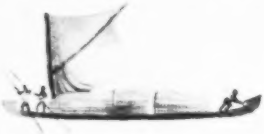

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Living in India

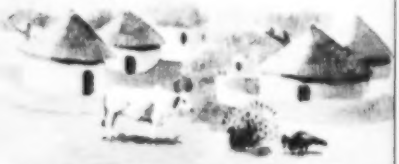
Imagine you are in a busy city street...

People on foot thread their way in between buffalo carts, cars, trucks and rickshaws. Horns sound, people shout, goats, cows and even elephants walk the streets. Monkeys leap from rooftop to rooftop and sneak down to steal fruit and vegetables from the little shops.

Rickshaw, a three-wheeled taxi

This is India, with six hundred and eighty-five million inhabitants: it is the most populated country in the world after China. It is separated from China by the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world. India is huge, and there are all sorts of different kinds of country: deserts, plains, jungles... Most Indians live in the countryside. But the towns are very full too.

Naga warrior of Mongol descent. The Nagas live at the foothills of the Himalayas.



Peasant from Rajasthan. Three-thousand years ago his ancestors arrived in Indja from Central Asia.

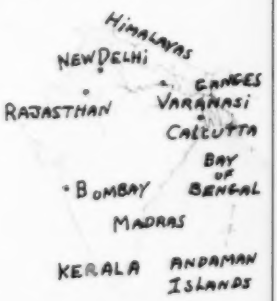
Farmer from Kerala of Dravidian descent. His ancestors were driven down into the south.

Negrito from the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean

The damp jungles of the Bengal delta are home to cobras, deer, rhinoceros, storks, crocodiles, monkeys and tigers.

In Rajasthan, there are camels, antelopes and elephants. In Gujerat there are even a few lions...

In the south, along the edges of the rice fields, there are elephants, herons, macaws and wild buffaloes.



The capital of India is New Delhi.
India is one-third the size of the United States, but has more than three times as many people.

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The wind is beginning to blow. Clouds are scudding across the sky. Then rain starts to fall, more and more of it, and storms flash and rumble. **This is the monsoon,** when the rains come and water soaks into the earth which has been baked dry by months of sunshine. Although many fields now have irrigation, the monsoon is still very important. Without it the farmers would have hardly anything to harvest and they would go hungry. But if the monsoon is too violent, then the crops are damaged, and that means not enough to eat as well. After the monsoon has passed, winter sets in. In the north, the nights are cold, and people wrap up well to keep warm. In the south, winter is mild. Summer starts around the end of March. By May it is so hot that the tar melts on the roadways. In the houses, big fans make a cooling breeze. At night, people sleep out of doors.

During the monsoon, there are often floods.

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In villages in the north, young girls celebrate the coming of the rains.

Things grow thick and green in the south where the monsoon falls heavily. The rice fields are watered by little canals.

In the Thar desert, in Rajasthan, women come to fetch water from a slowly drying pool.

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Buffaloes hauling water from the river to water the fields

Farming is hard work!

Men, women and children all help in the fields together. They have buffaloes and camels to pull their carts and more and more tractors too. Canals and electric pumps carry water to the rice fields, and to the fields of wheat and millet. As the fields get bigger the wildlife is being pushed back. Most tigers and panthers now live protected in wildlife reserves.

India is the world's foremost producer of tea. The Indians of South India drink tea all day long. Shopkeepers will offer you a cup while you're out shopping...

Tea plants grow in the hills in the northeast and the south of the country.

Peasants often paint the horns of their cows and buffaloes.

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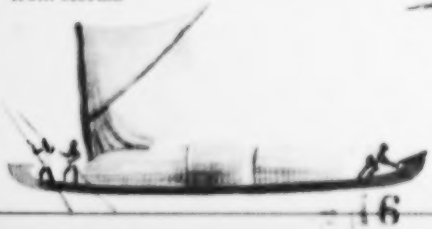
Would you like to go to school by boat?
A lot of children in Kerala do.
Kerala is a region of rice fields and spice plantations. The sea weaves its inlets in and out of the land. The people travel by boat along the lagoons and canals.
You can see families of elephants bathing in the lakes and rivers.
There are a lot of fishermen here.
The pepper that your mother uses in her cooking may have come from Kerala. Merchants have traded in Kerala pepper for hundreds of years.

Fishermen with their square net

Sailing boat from the gulf of Bengal

Sailing boat from Kerala



Grain is kept in raised storehouses.

A woman plasters the walls of her house with mud.

In this village in Rajasthan, the walls of the houses are a mixture of mud and straw. The roofs are made of thatch. The peasants sleep on string beds and keep their things in painted tin trunks. The women dry cow dung cakes to use as fuel for their cooking fires. There is a tree called the **neem.** It is an important tree in the village. Statues of the local gods are kept underneath it. The peasants leave offerings of rice and flowers, and light little oil lamps to ensure the gods' protection. They clean their teeth with twigs from the neem tree because of its medicinal qualities. There is even a neem toothpaste for townspeople.

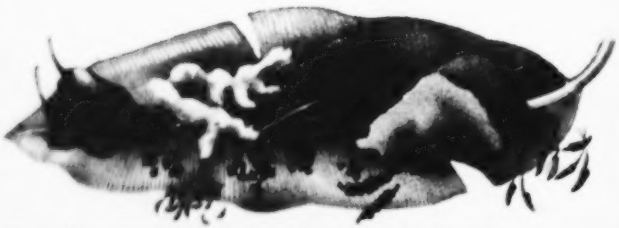
Cow dung drying in the sun

Making chapatis

How do Indians eat?

With the fingers of the right hand. Meals are usually accompanied by a dish of rice, or by cakes of wheat or millet called **chapatis,** which are used to pick up the meat or vegetables. There are many different **curries,** delicious, highly-spiced stews made of meat or fish or vegetables.

Puddings are very sweet, and made from saffron, rose water or coconut. Tea is often flavored with cinnamon, cardamom and cloves.



Spices: cinnamon, pepper, coriander, turmeric, pimento, cloves, cardamom, ginger, cumin, aniseed, saffron, all laid on a banana leaf

Coconut, mango, banana, papaya

Did you know that Hindus will never kill a cow?

In olden days, they were afraid of running out of milk. Now the cow is a sacred animal. Some Indians regard all living things as sacred. They are vegetarians, and will never eat meat or fish or eggs. Others will only eat meat on family feast days.

Dishes are placed around the rice on a big metal platter called a thali.

What sort of clothes do Indians wear?

Women wear a **sari.** This is a brightly-colored piece of silk or cotton cloth which is several yards long, wrapped around the waist and then draped over the left shoulder. In western India, peasant women wear a full skirt, a little blouse decorated with mirror spangles, and a long veil. The men wear a **kurta**, a collarless shirt, over **churidar**, tight cotton trousers, or over a **dhoti**, a length of cloth wrapped around the waist and tucked between the legs.

If a woman wears red powder worked into the parting of her hair, it means she is married.
Women also decorate their foreheads with a dot of red paint, a **tika.**

They wear wonderful jewels.
In the country, they are heavy and made of silver; in the towns, they are fine and made of gold.
Often they are set with precious stones.
These jewels represent most of the family riches, and the peasant women wear them day and night.

Jewels worn by women in Rajasthan

In the towns, the men wear European clothes.

The bridegroom arrives at his fiancée's house on a beautifully dressed horse, accompanied by a young brother or cousin.

Often, parents choose husbands and wives for their children.

Indians very rarely marry outside their own social and religious group, or **caste.** An astrologer makes sure that the bride's and bridegroom's horoscopes are well-matched. Then he decides the best date for the wedding. In Rajasthan, the ceremony takes place at night at the bride's house. The bride and groom, dressed in the finest silk and brocade, walk seven times around a holy fire. The groom lifts up the bride's veil; this may be the first time he has seen her. Weddings are magnificent and cost a lot of money. The couple live in the groom's house, where the groom's mother rules the household.

The bride's hands and feet are decorated with fine patterns traced in a vegetable dye called henna.

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Ganesh

Kali

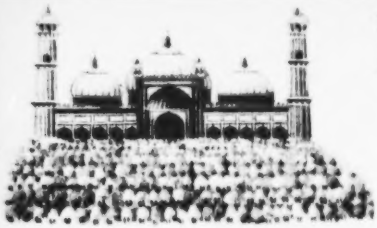
Buddha

Hanuman

The majority of Indians belong to the Hindu religion.
For the Hindus, God has thirty-three million different forms.
The three main forms are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Children learn about them by hearing stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, long tales all about the gods and their battles.

Families go together to the temples and lay wreaths of flowers at the gods' feet.

A Brahman priest



Muslims pray to Allah, their name for God, by kneeling and bowing down five times a day.

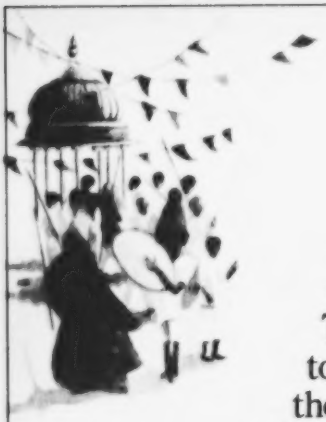
Sikhs wear daggers in their turbans.

The Hindus believe that after somebody has died the soul is born again as some other living thing: a person, animal or insect. This is called **reincarnation.** There are seventy-five million Muslims in India, and over sixteen million Christians. It is one of the oldest Christian communities in the world. Buddhism began in India, and has spread from there throughout Asia.

The Jains respect all life, even that of insects.

Pilgrims kiss the feet of a statue of Bahubali, a Jain god.

The Ganges is a sacred river to all Hindus. They believe that the river was put on earth by the god Brahma, and that it flows from Vishnu's big toe, or from Shiva's flowing hair. Indians call it Ganga Mai, our mother Ganges. Hindus believe that, if you bathe in it, it will wash away your sins. To a Hindu, if you die in Varanasi, a holy city on the banks of the Ganges, you will not have to be reincarnated again. The dead are burned on the bank, and their ashes scattered over the river among the flower garlands of the pilgrims.



The festival of Holi is celebrated with flags and drums.

India is a land of festivals! There are feasts to celebrate all the thousands of gods. Some feasts last for several days. **Diwali is the Festival of Light.** In the northern part of the country they celebrate Diwali at the new year. Each house glimmers with hundreds of tiny oil lamps, and children set off fireworks. **Holi is a spring harvest festival.** People dance through the streets, scattering water and red powder. **Dassehra** is a festival celebrating the victory of Rama, the hero god of the Ramayana stories, over Ravana, a ten-headed demon. Ravana kidnapped Sita, Rama's wife, but Hanuman the monkey god and all his monkey tribe rescued her.

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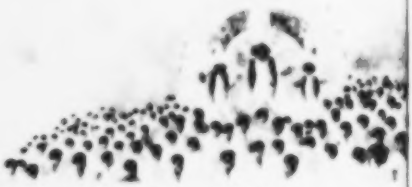
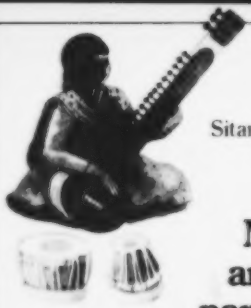
In Bombay, the festival of Ganpati is held in honor of Ganesh, the elephant god.



In Calcutta, there is a festival for Kali, a goddess with ten arms.

In Kerala, during the festival of Trichur Pooram, people compete to have the most beautiful umbrellas.

During the festival of Dassehra, the maharaja of Varanasi greets the crowd from high up on the back of his elephant.



Sitar and tablas drums

Music and dance are an important part of daily life.

Did you know that Indian musicians don't read the music that they play? They make it up as they go along. There are special kinds of tunes to play in the afternoon, in the evening and at night. Musicians play the sitar or the tambura, accompanied by the little tablas drums, played with the fingertips. There are all kinds of music. Often in the countryside you can hear a flute singing clearly in the night air.

Kathakali actors with their painted faces

Indian dancers

If you go walking in the streets, you may meet dancing bears, trained monkeys, snake charmers, acrobats...

Indian dancers can speak with their hands. They use their hands and their eyes to tell stories and to conjure up feelings: sadness, love, fear. They can mime a woman drawing water from a well, a river flowing, nectar dripping...
It takes more than four hours to make up an actor for Kathakali, the traditional theater of the Kerala region. Sometimes the actors fall asleep while they are being made up, in order to rest for the evening ahead!

Fakirs may stretch out on spiny cactus leaves, or bury themselves up to the neck in sand, to do penance for their sins. Passersby give them donations.

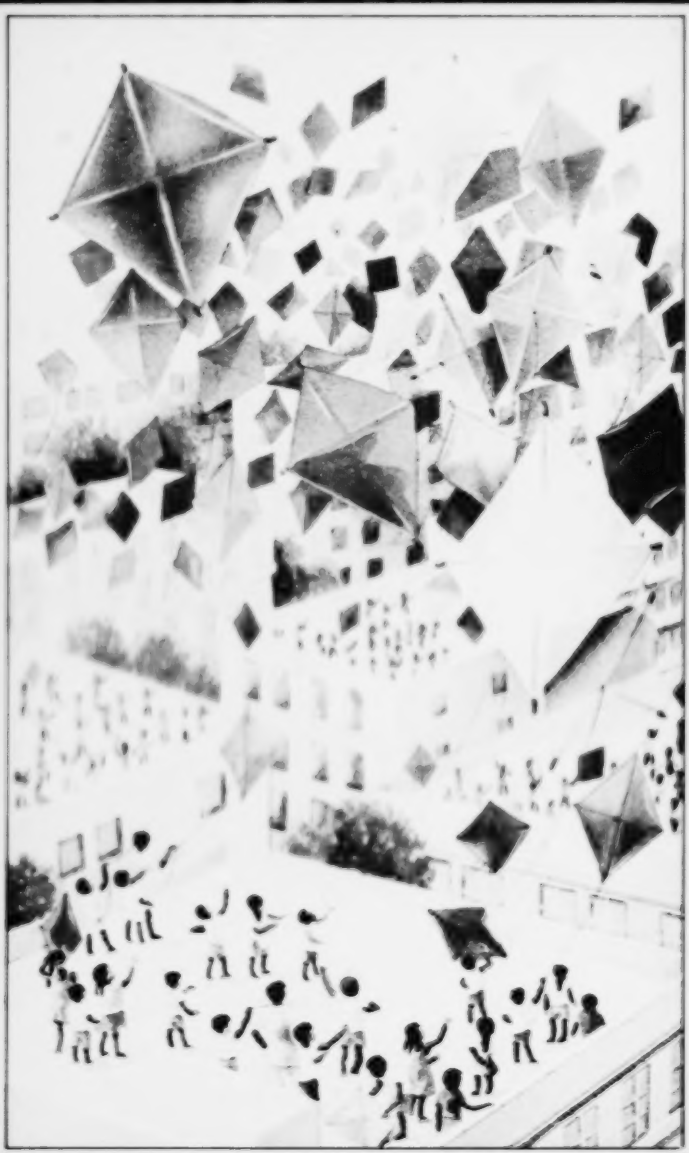
In the villages, school is often held out of doors, with the blackboard propped up against a tree.

There are fifteen main languages, and fourteen ways of writing.
The national language is Hindi, but a lot of people speak English too. And there are five hundred different dialects as well.

Children play with hoops.

Do you like playing with a kite?
A lot of Indian children do. In January there is a big kite festival. The whole family climbs up onto the roof, and the sky is filled with brightly colored kites, each trying to cut the others' strings.

The Indians love to play cricket.



Which country in the world makes the most films? India! **They make at least eight-hundred films a year.** The Indians love going to the movies. All the family, even the babies, go together.

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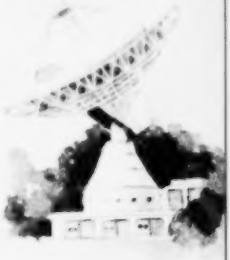
India is a country
full of a mixture of
old and new — alongside
buffaloes tilling the
fields stand satellite
tracking stations.
Its history has been
shaped by all sorts of
different peoples and
different traditions. For a long time,
India was ruled by the Moguls. Then
it was ruled by the English.
Since 1947 it has been independent.



In The Bazaars of Hyderabad

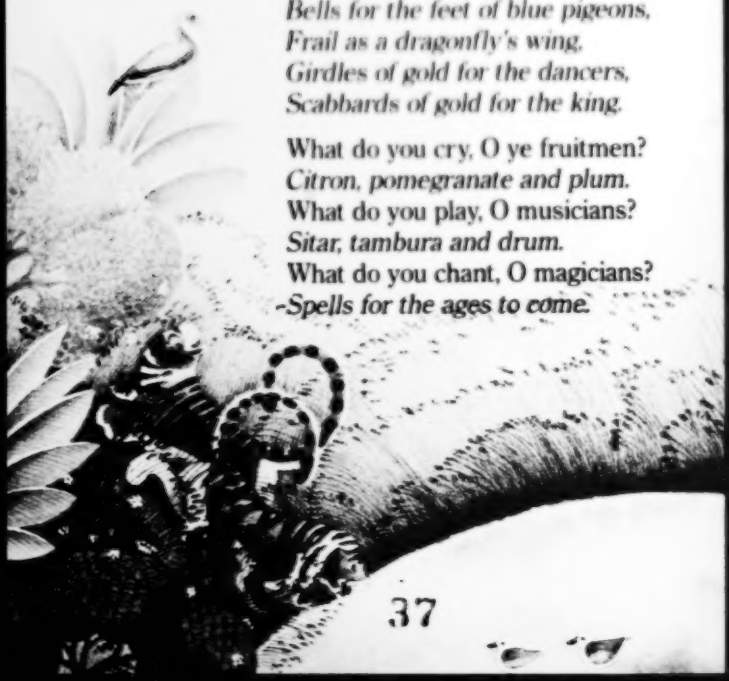
by Sarojini Naidu

What do you sell, O ye merchants?
Richly your wares are displayed.
Turbans of crimson and silver,
Tunics of purple brocade,
Mirrors with panels of amber,
Daggers with handles of jade.

What do you weigh, O ye vendors?
Saffron and lentil and rice.
What do you grind, O ye maidens?
Sandlewood, henna and spice.
What do you call, O ye peddlers?
Chessmen and ivory dice.

What do you make, O ye goldsmiths?
Wrislet and anklet and ring,
Bells for the feet of blue pigeons,
Frail as a dragonfly's wing,
Girdles of gold for the dancers,
Scabbards of gold for the king.

What do you cry, O ye fruitmen?
Citron, pomegranate and plum.
What do you play, O musicians?
Sitar, tambura and drum.
What do you chant, O magicians?
-Spells for the ages to come.



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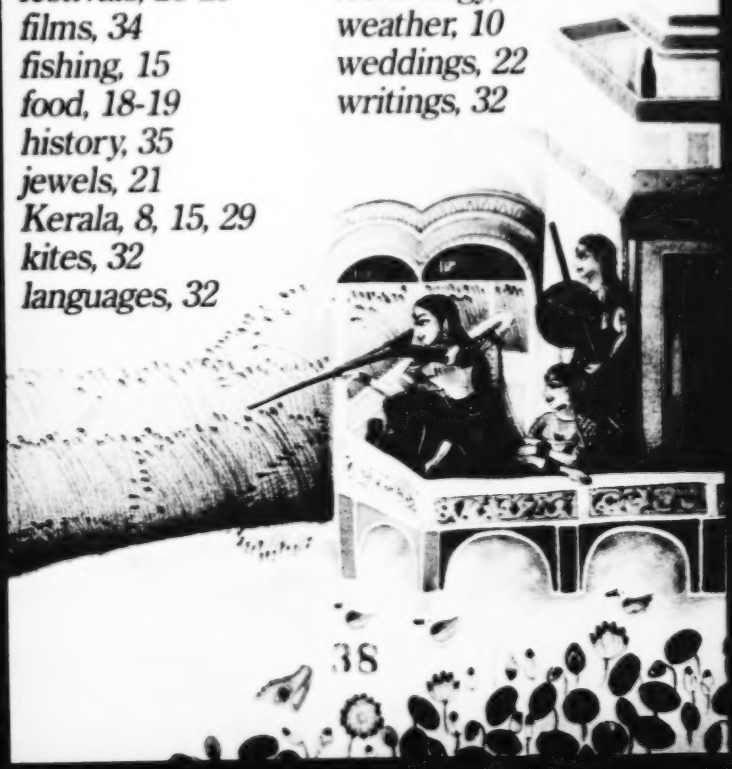

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Books of Discovery for children five through ten...

Young Discovery Library is an international undertaking — the series is now published in nine countries. It is the world's first pocket encyclopedia for children, 120 titles will be published.

Each title in the series is an education on the subject covered: a collaboration among the author, the illustrator, an advisory group of elementary school teachers and an academic specialist on the subject.

The goal is to respond to the endless curiousity of children, to fascinate and educate.

Living in India,
illustrated by Aline Riquier,
is No. 14 in a series of books of
discovery for children five years
old and upwards.

- **How many different peoples live in India?**
- **Do all Indians speak the same language?**
- **What fruits and spices grow in India?**

- **How is a wedding celebrated in Rajasthan?**
- **What is the Hindu Festival of Light?**
- **How do you put on a sari?**

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